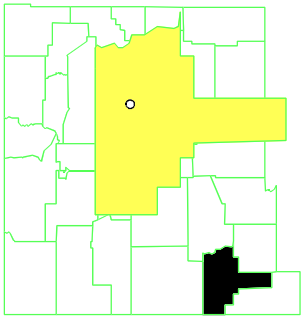
CLEVELAND MILL

NEW MEXICO

EPA ID# NMD981155930



EPA REGION 6

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 02

Grant County

Updated:

April 28, 1997

Site Description

Location:

- 5 miles northeast of Silver City

Population:

- Approximately 1,200 area residents, mainly along Little Walnut Creek, draw drinking water from private wells within 3 miles of the site.

Setting:

- The site is an abandoned lead, zinc, and copper mine and mill covering about 4 acres near mine and about 10 acres of the bed of Little Walnut Creek.
- It is located 100 yards south of the Continental Divide at the headwaters of Little Walnut Creek.
- An on-site reservoir is used for recreational purposes.
- Tailings from the mill are deposited in piles in the mill area and they have also been washed into Little Walnut Creek. The piles are uncovered, unstabilized and unlined.

Hydrology:

- Run-off from the facility has acidified Little Walnut Creek and has contaminated it with metals. Residential wells installed along the creek, though not contaminated with toxic substances, have shown indicator parameters that indicate that they have been affected by the mine tailings.

Wastes and Volumes

1. Principal pollutants: Lead, zinc, arsenic, cadmium and beryllium

2. Volume: Estimated 100,000 cubic yards in about 9 piles and in the streambed.

Site Assessment and Ranking

NPL LISTING HISTORY

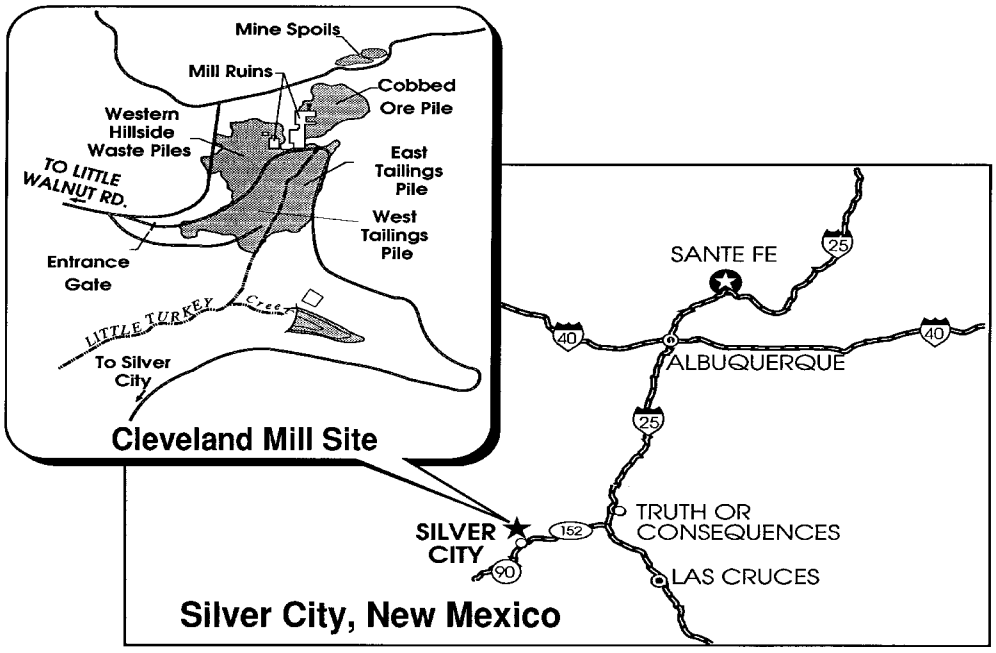
Site HRS Score: 40.37

Proposed Date: 6/24/88

Final Date: 3/31/89

NPL Update: No. 7

Site Map and Diagram



The Remediation Process

Site History:

- From 1910 to 1916, 150,000 tons of ore were processed at Cleveland Mill.
- Tailings were disposed of outside of the mill building at the headwaters of a creek.
- Mill closed and moved in 1919.
- From 1919 through the 1950s, the site was leased to a series of people.
- Limited information is available on site activities from 1950 through the present (assumed abandoned).
- In 1985, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) conducted a Site Inspection (SI) which indicated that run-off from the facility into Little Walnut Creek contained elevated concentrations of metals.
- Special Notice Letters were sent to the PRPs on 12/27/89.
- Good faith offers from the PRPs were not received during 60 day moratorium; therefore, EPA performed a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) using funds from the trust.
- The RI/FS reports and the Proposed Plan were released to the public in April 1993. An extended public comment period for the Proposed Plan was held from April 9, 1993, through June 9, 1993.
- The ROD issued September 22, 1993 called for excavation, off site reprocessing and recycling, and site revegetation.
- The Consent Decree between EPA and three PRPs was entered on June 12, 1995.

Health Considerations:

- Direct contact and ingestion threat; shallow, on-site aquifer is contaminated with metals.

Other Environmental Risks:

- Acidic run-off from facility into Little Walnut Creek potentially transports metals into residential wells.

Record of Decision

Signed: September 22, 1993

Remedy Selected: Off site reprocessing, recycling and disposal

Other Remedies Considered	Reason Not Chosen
1. No Action	Not Protective
2. On site stabilization/disposal	Future leaching potential/long term O&M
3. On site disposal/capping	" " " " " "
4. On site stabilization/off site disposal	Cost

Community Involvement

- Community Involvement Plan: Developed 3/91
- Open houses and workshops: 8/91, 4/93, 7/94, 9/94, 11/94, 1/95
- Proposed Plan Fact Sheet and Public Meeting: 4/8/93
- Milestone Fact Sheets: 4/93, 1/94, 3/94
- Open House/Citizen Advisory Committee Meetings, 5/94, 7/94, 9/94, 11/94, 2/95, 6/95, 12/95
- Citizens on site mailing list: 400
- Constituency Interest:
  - Primary community concerns are with other active mining operations, transportation routes of mining materials.
- Community Working Group established 11/94.
- Site Repository: Silver City Library; NMED Office, Santa Fe, NM; EPA Office, Dallas, TX

Technical Assistance Grant

- Availability Notice: None
- Letters of Intent Received: None
- Grant Award: N/A
- Current Status: No community interest in applying for TAG grant although information has been provided.

Fiscal and Program Management

- **Remedial Project Manager (EPA):** Kathleen Aisling, 214/665-8509, Mail Sta. 6SF-LN
- **State Contact:** Bob King, 505/827-0078
- **Community Involvement Coord. (EPA):** Olivia R. Balandrán, 214/665-6584, Mail Sta. 6SF-P
- **Attorney (EPA):** Jim Costello, 214/665-8045, Mail Sta. 6SF-DL
- **State Coordinator (EPA):**
- **Prime Contractor: RI/FS** - E&E; **Design/Construction** - PRP lead, NMED oversight

Cost Recovery: EPA Lead

- PRPs Identified: 3
- Viable PRPs:
    - Mining Remedial Recovery Company, a subsidiary of Sharon Steel Corporation is now the current owner of most of the Cleveland Mill site.
    - Bayard Mining Corporation - past owner through mergers, current partial site owner
    - Viacom International, formerly Paramount Communications, past owner through mergers.

Present Status and Issues

- Currently, the PRPs are performing Remedial Design activities in compliance with the Consent Decree.
- Because no acceptable reprocessing facililty could be found, EPA, NMED, and the PRPs have agreed to change the remedy lime treatment and disposal in a cell on-site. The remedy will begin as a removal action because surface water quality has deteriorated due to acidic runoff carrying metals into Little Walnut Creek.

Benefits

- The site is being addressed in a single long-term remedial phase focusing on contamination at the entire site.

- Remediation of the tailings will address a source of contamination to Little Walnut Creek and a potential threat to the residential wells that are already established.

- The site and adjacent five mile stretch of Little Walnut Creek is in a rapidly developing residential area. It is expected that the PRPs will sell the property for residential development upon completion of the remedy.

- The PRPs have also considered giving a piece of this land to the county or city for a park.